ABUS

NEWSLETTER #52

ABUG #52   OCTOBER 1987

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DIARY

.The next few meetings will be held on:

  4 November
18 November
 2 December
16 December   Christmas Party

All meetings are held at the Sheffield Trades and Labour Club, Duke Street.

We are hoping to put on a buffet for our meeting on December, and your Committee is discussing this with people at the Trades and Labour Club. As in previous years, we will ask members to pay a nominal amount towards the cost, with the rest being paid for out of club funds. Guests will be welcome, but they will be asked to pay the actual cost of the food. There will be more details about arrangements and costs in the next Newsletter, and they will also be announced at club meetings as soon as they are finalised.

USER SHOWS

Don't forget that the final user show of the year is the Electron and Micro User Show, being held at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Westminster, London, from Friday 13 to Sunday 15 November.

A & B give advance news that next year's Acorn User Show will be at the Barbican (again), from 23 to 27 July.

WILL THE ARC PROVIDE ACORN'S LIFELINE?

Acorn slid back into the red again during the first six months of the year, losing £1.37 million, compared with a £140,000 loss for the same period last year and a £1.4 million 'operating profit' for 1986 as a whole. Turnover dropped slightly from £19.5 million to £19.02 million compared with January to June 1986. Acorn said that they were disappointed with the figures, but pointed out that money was being spent heavily on the final stages of the Archimedes development, while sales of the existing models dropped in anticipation of the new machine. Local authority spending was also down, which affects Acorn, who have 50% of the education market.

Acorn can overdraw by up to £16 million, but their £2.8 million overdraft at the end of June was the same as it had been at the end of December 1986. Acorn's managing director, Brian Long is optimistic that sales of the Archimedes will put them back into profit, but whether this will happen by the end of the year remains to be seen.

AWARD FOR ARCHIMEDES

The Archimedes had pride of place at the recent PCW Show in London, with the Acorn stand situated just inside the main entrance. Seats were provided for fifty or so people, and presentations of programs and facilities from the Welcome disc alternated with demonstrations of its music capability via MIDI keyboards and other equipment. The shows seemed very popular, with all the seats taken when I was there on the Thursday, and a dozen or so people standing at the back. I don't know how many computers they sold, but there was a 'show offer' of £100 off the price of all Archimedes models. I wonder if that will be repeated at the upcoming Electron and Micro User Show!

The British Micro Awards are handed out at the show, and the Archimedes won the Home/Small Business Micro of the Year prize, so look out for the 'Award Winning' flash on the advertisements!

WHAT'S IN THE MAGS?

At least two magazines devoted to the Archimedes have appeared, available by mail order only. These are:

RISC USER, Dolphin Place, Holywell Hill, St Albans, Herts. AL1 1EX. £6.90/6 months, £12.50/year. (10 issues per year.) (That's from the Beebug people.)

ARCHIVE from Norwich Computer Services, 18 Mile End Rd, Norwich. NR4 7QY. £6.50/6 months, £10/year.

I don't intend covering these magazines in this section, but if any Arc owner (or would-be owner) buys them, I'll include any comments they care to make (within reason!).

DISK USER, Oct/Nov 1987, #3, 36pp + double sided ("flippy") 40
        track 5.25 inch disc, £2.95

On Paper:
    Archimedes and discs / Advanced Control Panel review /
    Getting the best from your DFS
On Disc:
    Automatic regular backups / Tazman game / Cholo editor /
    Personalise default message / Dual catalogue creator / Mode
    7 animation / Educational maths / BASIC code compactors /
    Scientific calculator / Quick copy utility / Micronet
    demonstration

A & B COMPUTING, November 1987, Vol 4, #11, 116pp + 28pp Master
                Series Special Supplement, £1.50

Features:
    Microvitec monitor conversion for use with the Archimedes /
    Arc graphics / Hints for System Delta users / Performer
    music program for physically handicapped children /

Pascal / Printers for business / communications / Beginners'
The Master / Classroom utility programs / variables dynamic
Compact
Programs:
Terminal emulator for SWR / LOGO for AI / Faster backing up
for the Master between DFS/DFS, ADFS/ADFS & DFS/ADFS /
Master pattern generator / Master bar & pie charts
Reviews:
Arcade games / Overlay BASIC rom / Maths educational
software / Book: The MOS Guide (for the Master) / Beebug
Master rom / Advanced Control Panel rom / Helping Hand ADFS
rom / Master Centurion rom / Master Write-Protect module

THE MICRO USER, November 1987, Vol 5, #9, 156pp, £1.25
Features:
Zarch writing / Arcade games' secrets, inc Cholo /
Microlink's bulletin board / Ceefax programs for October /
Linking a liquid crystal display to a Beeb
Programs:
Estimate paint requirements / Dunehunter game / Circle
drawing / Ceefax teachers' notes downloading / Pixel editor
/ Print out listings in 2 columns
Reviews:
3 versions of C / Arcade games / Books: Mastering View,
Viewsheet and Viewstore & A Dabhand Guide - View / Vine
Romboard 4 for the Master / Adventure Games, inc Snowball
map / The Mystery Squad and the Dead Man's Message -
educational game / Typesetter! & The Fleet Street Phantom -
desk top publishing packages / Saturn Palette Extension
Board

ACORN USER, November 1987, #64, 178pp + re-useable function key
strip, £1.30
Features:
Passing variables in assembler / BBC to Arc file transfer /
Recursion / View macros / Disc back-up with swr / Desk top
publishing / The Beeb in business / Compatibility of Master
512 with IBM PC
Programs:
Photographer's toolkit / Wordwise Plus set-up
Reviews:
Arcade games / Halcien language / Interbase / MicroCODIL
language / Epson LQ-800 printer / View Professional

COVER

This month's cover was drawn by Ian Brown, with the help of
design consultant Matthew Dobson. If anyone would like to have a
go at designing and/or drawing a cover, please let me know.